

Manlius Thomas House
125 North Mulberry Street
Georgetown
Scott County
Kentucky

HABS No. KY-224

HABS
KY,
105-GE070,
6-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Southeast Region
Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HABS
Ky.
105-GEOT
6-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

MANLIUS THOMAS HOUSE

HABS No. KY-224

Location: 125 North Mulberry Street
Georgetown, Kentucky
Scott county, Kentucky

U.S.G.S. topographic quadrangle: Georgetown (7.5)
Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates:
16.712800.4231620

Present Owner: Georgetown Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency

Present Occupant: vacant

Present Use: none (scheduled for demolition)

Statement of Significance: The Manlius Thomas house is an example of a turn-of-the-century residence built by an African-American carpenter/builder for his own use. It is unusual in its immediate neighborhood because it was owner-occupied in its early years; the neighboring houses were largely rentals, and frequently designed for occupancy by more than one household. This house is also notable because it is the only two-story side-passage house in its immediate neighborhood.

MANLIUS THOMAS HOUSE
HABS NO. KY-224 (page 2)

PART I: HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

1. **Date of erection:** after 1895 (when lot was purchased by Thomas) and prior to 1901 (when house is shown on Sanborn insurance map).

2. **Architect/Builder:** Manlius Thomas

3. **Original and subsequent owners:**

1842 deed, recorded in Volume R, p. 401, Particular Baptist Church to George L. Vallandingham. This deed refers to subsequent sale of property to Robert Garlick, and then to Mark Kershaw.

1859 deed, recorded in Volume 4, p. 535, Mark and Elizabeth Kershaw to Betsey Robinson, "a free woman of color".

1895 deed, recorded in Volume 29, p. 452, Betsey Robinson to Manlius and Virgie Thomas.

1943 deed, recorded in Volume 68, p. 165, Martha Elizabeth Horner et al. (Manlius and Virgie Thomas heirs) to James and Alvin Patterson.

1986 deed, recorded in Volume 167, p. 513, Gladys Patterson and Cornelia P. Portee (James and Alvin Patterson heirs) to Andrea Campbell.

1990 deed, September, 1991, recorded in Volume 189, p. 435, Andrea Campbell to Georgetown Urban Renewal and Community Development Agency.

4. **Alterations and additions:** aluminum siding on exterior; porch has replacement cast iron posts.

B. Historical Context: The Manlius Thomas house represents a relatively "high status" residence with regard to the African-American working-class population of Georgetown. Built and occupied by a prominent African-American builder/carpenter, the house is the largest residence in its small neighborhood and was constructed with greater care and better materials than its neighbors. Although not ornate in its exterior details, it presented a solid, prominent and moderately prosperous image that contrasted with the more unassuming houses around it. Within the context of Georgetown society at large, this house was solidly middle class in its appearance but it represented greater status in the African-American segment of Georgetown's population for whom ownership of such a house meant attainment of a prosperity most blacks could only aspire to and rarely realize.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement: The Manlius Thomas house is a two story, frame, vernacular residence that appears from the exterior

MANLIUM THOMAS HOUSE
HABS NO. KY-224 (page 3)

to be a T-plan but is, actually, a side-passage plan. The house features an intersecting gable roof, wide replacement siding, single light sash windows and a limestone foundation.

1. Architectural character: This structure is worth recording because it represents an example of a type of housing built and occupied by relatively prosperous African-Americans in a small southern city. It was meant for single-household occupancy, and is relatively spacious compared to its neighbors.

2. Condition of fabric: good, but deteriorating as a result of being vacant.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Main block: 15' 3" by 40' 10"; side passage: 9' 7" by 26' 7".

2. Foundations: rough cut, random coursed, mortared limestone block.

3. Walls: aluminum siding over original wood weatherboarding.

4. Structural system, framing: assumed to be balloon framing; dimensional lumber.

5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The front porch is located at the junction of the "T"; it measures 12' 4" by 7' 3". The porch is shed-roofed with replacement cast iron posts.

6. Chimneys: single central brick chimney with corbelled cap in main block.

7. Openings: (By elevations)
The front (east) two-bay elevation has a panelled 1/2 light entry to the south, recessed beneath the front porch, and an oversized, 1/1 sash window in the first floor. The second floor windows are also 1/1 sash.

The south elevation has two windows, one a fixed, diamond shape and the other a 1/1 sash.

The rear (west) elevation features a two story projecting ell with two bays and a one story shed to the south side.

The north side features two bays (two up, two down) with 1/1 sash windows.

8. Roof: tri-gabled; asphalt shingle; slightly projecting eave with molded trim board.

C. Description of Interior:

1. **Floor plans:** The house plan features a side passage with two rooms to the side. The living rooms are both accessed by the side hall. The front room measures 15' 3" by 15' 3"; the rear room measures 15' 3" by 16' 3". The stairs lead to the second floor. There is a first floor hall and a small second floor room. These features are contained within an area measuring 9' 7" by 26' 7". The second floor contains two large rooms in the main block and a small room and stairs above the side passage. A half bath was added to the rear porch in the northwest corner. A partial cellar is accessed by a door in the floor of the rear porch.

2. **Stairways:** Stairs in the front room of the side passage lead to the second floor. The stairs narrow in width from 3' 3" to 2' 10" as one proceeds upstairs. The stairs run east-west along the south wall to a landing, then turn a right angle and run north-south to the second floor. The stair is quite decorative featuring a carved, Eastlake style newel post (possibly oak), turned spindles, and decorative molding trim along the stringer.

3. **Wall and ceiling finish:** Walls and ceiling are original manufactured lath and plaster (in generally fair condition).

4. **Openings:** The first floor living room or parlor accesses the hallway and the rear room in the main block. The rear room on first floor accesses the side passage as well. The side passage has a hall running the length of the house from the front door to the rear porch. A half bath is entered from the rear porch.

6. **Decorative features and trim:** Slightly unusual door and window trim features a center groove trim board and corner blocks with cross-grooves. Three different mantles include a simple Greek Revival type with flat shelf and frieze, and squared pilasters on bases; a metal mantle (late 19th century) with bracketed shelf and triangular block centered beneath squared shelf; and a somewhat oddly proportioned wood Classical Revival mantle with round side columns supporting a rectangular shelf. The fireboxes of the two wood mantles are infilled.

D. Site

1. **General setting and orientation:** The house is located on the west side of North Mulberry Street, and fronts east.

2. **Historic landscape design:** none

3. **Outbuildings:** none

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original architectural drawings: none
- B. Early views: none
- C. Interviews: none
- D. Bibliography

1. Primary and unpublished sources: Scott county deed books (see Section I.3); Ann Bolton Bevins, 1989, INVOLVEMENT OF BLACKS IN SCOTT COUNTY COMMERCE DURING THE POSTBELLUM PERIOD (1865-1918). Manuscript on file, Kentucky Heritage Council, Frankfort, Kentucky.

2. Secondary and published sources: none known

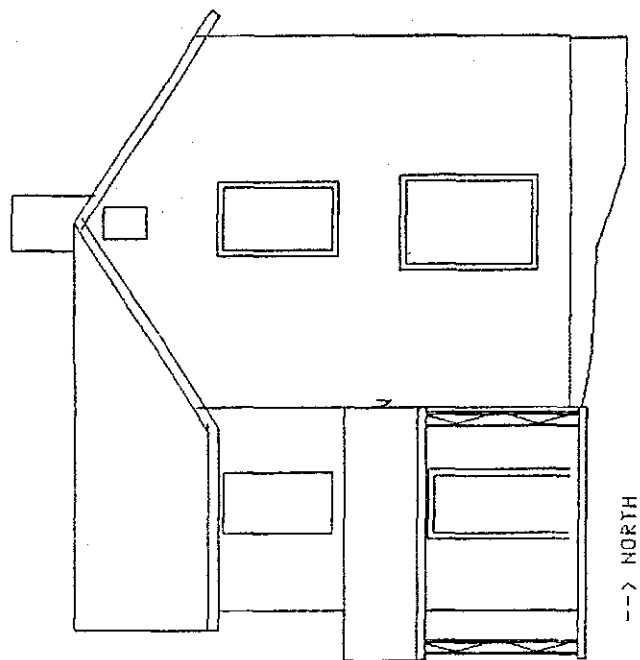
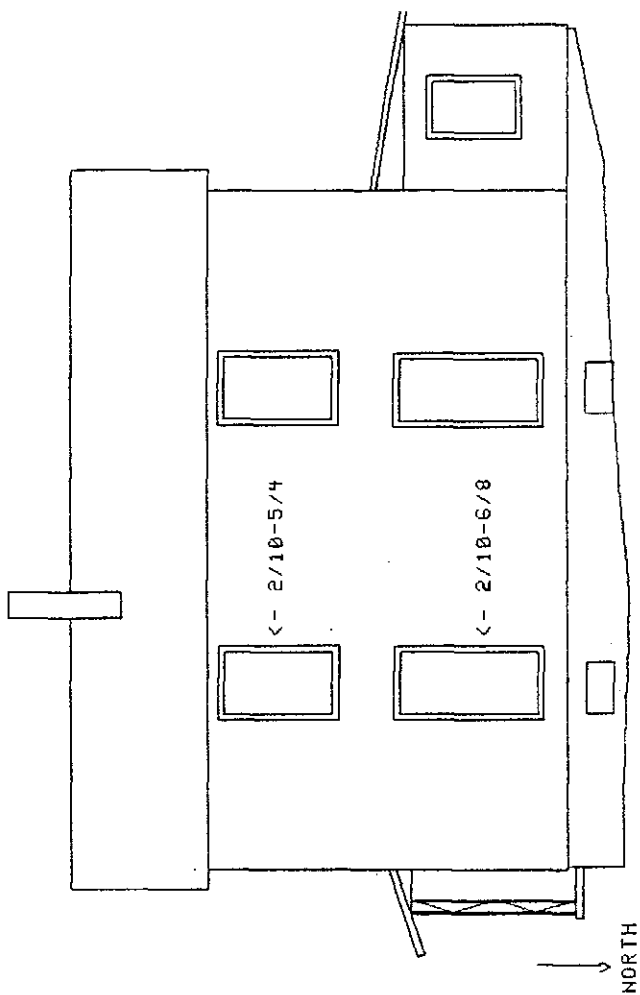
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The HABS documentation of this and other buildings is being performed to comply with the requirements of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the City of Georgetown and the Kentucky Heritage Council. The City of Georgetown received a CDBG grant to acquire these buildings in order to demolish them, owing to their poor condition and because they are unsuitable for rehabilitation and reuse. The MOA required that the structures be documented according to HABS criteria and accepted by HABS prior to demolition.

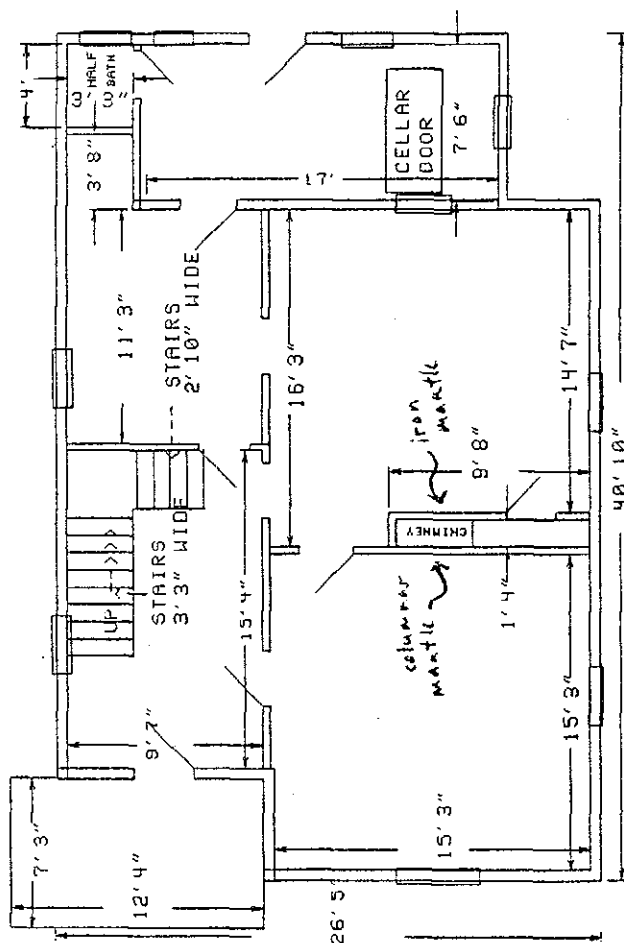
The following people and firms contributed to the documentation effort:

Charlie Perkins, City Attorney, Georgetown, Kentucky
John Coyle, Georgetown Housing Authority
William Hamilton, Mayor's Office, Georgetown, Kentucky
Will Linder & Associates, Consultants, Inc., Berea, Kentucky
Chris Amos, architectural historian, Amos & Burry, Inc.,
Shelbyville, Kentucky
Ann Bolton Bevins, architectural historian, Georgetown, Kentucky

Prepared by: Nancy O'Malley
Title: Research Associate in Anthropology
Affiliation: University of Kentucky, Lexington
Date: November 15, 1991



125 N. MULBERRY GEORGETOWN, KY JUNE 24, 1991



SCALE

1" = 5' 1" = 10'

MANLIUS THOMAS HOUSE
HABS No. KY-224 (page 6)

